UNITED
NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/PRST/1995/20
24 April 1995

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STATEMENT BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

At the 3523rd meeting of the Security Council, held on 24 April 1995, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The question concerning Haiti", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes the transfer of responsibilities from the multinational force (MNF) to UNMIH that took place on 31 March 1995 and shares the Secretary-General's view, as stated in his report of 13 April (S/1995/305), that this transfer was a milestone in the overall efforts of the international community to bring peace and stability to Haiti. The Council commends the Secretary-General, his Special Representative, the MNF Force Commander and the other dedicated personnel of the United Nations and MNF who made the transition possible.

"The Security Council notes, however, that much remains to be done to institutionalize democracy in Haiti and reiterates the Secretary-General's call for the people of Haiti and their leaders to help UNMIH help them. While UNMIH's presence will assist the Haitian Government to sustain a secure and stable environment, the existence of a functioning and fair justice system and the early deployment of a permanent and effective police force by the Haitian authorities are central to Haiti's long-term stability. The Council joins the Secretary-General and Friends of Haiti in inviting Member States to make voluntary contributions to support the international police monitoring programme and assist with the creation of an adequate police force.

"The Government and people of Haiti bear the primary responsibility for Haiti's political, economic and social reconstruction. However, the Security Council notes that the sustained commitment of the international community is indispensable for long-term peace and stability in Haiti.

"The Security Council shares the opinion of the Secretary-General that the issue of security is central to the entire United Nations operation in Haiti.

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"The Security Council underlines the crucial importance of free, fair and secure elections for the democratic future of Haiti. The Council stresses the necessity of a secure environment in Haiti, including during the June and July legislative and local election period, and underlines the importance of a functioning police force and an established judicial system. The Council urges the Government of Haiti to take all necessary steps to ensure the success of the elections, and in particular to register as many voters as possible prior to the elections and to assure, in cooperation with the international community, that political campaigning occurs in an environment free from partisan intimidation.

"The Security Council welcomes President Aristide's meetings with leaders of political parties and members of the Provisional Electoral Council and stresses the importance of dialogue with a view to achieving the political consensus needed to enhance the benefits and credibility of the electoral process. The Council also calls on the Government of Haiti to cooperate fully with the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) to ensure that the preparations for elections and the elections themselves can take place in a secure and stable environment. Consistent with the objectives of Security Council resolution 940 (1994), the Council emphasizes the importance for the Presidential elections to take place on schedule before UNMIH's scheduled withdrawal in February 1996.

"Finally, the Security Council welcomes the Secretary-General's decision to coordinate UNMIH's peace-keeping mission with development activities carried out by others, in a manner consistent with UNMIH's mandate, to help the Government of Haiti strengthen its institutions, particularly the judicial system. The Council hopes this coordination will promote closer cooperation of all concerned in Haiti as well as improve the effectiveness of international support for rebuilding Haiti's economy."